

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CPRS UR US

SUBJ: CUSTOMS CONFISCATION: EDYTHE LUTZKER

REF: A. STATE 227541; B. MOSCOW 14501; C. MOSCOW 9638

1. DURING CONSOFFS' CALL ON MFA/USA DIVISION FIRST
SECY TRINFONV DEC 28, LATTER GAVE WHAT WAS DESCRIBED
AS FINAL MFA RESPONSE ON SEPT 1971 CONFISCATION BY
SOVIET CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES OF LUTZKER RESEARCH MATERIALS.

2. TRIFONOV STATED THAT MFA REPLY TO SECOND EMBASSY
NOTE (NO. 893 OF AUGUST 14) IS SAME AS THAT TO FIRST
NOTE (NO. 675 OF JUNE 25), NAMELY THAT CONFISCATED
MATERIALS "ARE NOT SUBJECT TO EXPORT BEYOND BORDERS
USSR." ALTHOUGH HIS STATEMENT WAS ORAL, TRIFONOV
INDICATED THAT IT WOULD BE USELESS FOR EMBASSY PURSUE
MATTER FURTHER.

3. CONSOFFS EXPRESSED DEEP DISAPPOINTMENT WITH MFA
REPLY, AND THEY REITERATED THAT: A) SOME OF THE MATERIAL
HAD BEEN BROUGHT INTO THE USSR BY LUZKER; B) THE
CONFISCATED MATERIALS WERE GENERALLY OLD AND WERE OF
SCIENTIFIC HISTORICAL NATURE; AND C) MRS. LUTZKER HAD
BEEN INVITED TO USSR TO PARTICIPATE IN SCIENTIFIC
CONFERENCES ON HER SPECIALTY, THE LIFE OF RUSSIAN
BIOLOGIST HAFKINE (1860-1930). CONSOFFS ASKED IF IT
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WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE, THEREFORE, FOR APPROPRIATE

SOVIET AUTHORITIES TO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT THE MATERIALS AND DECIDED WHETHER AT LEAST SOME OF THEM COULD BE RETURNED TO LUZKER. WHEN TRIFONOV REPLIED NEGATIVELY, CONSOFFS ASKED WHERE MATERIALS NOW LOCATED AND WHETHER THEY ARE INTACT. TRIFONOV REPLIED THAT IT IS "DIFFICULT TO SAY" WHERE MATERIALS NOW LOCATED, AND HE INDICATED HE DOES NOT RPT NOT KNOW WHETHER THEY HAVE BEEN DESTROYED. CONSOFFS THEN REITERATED REQUEST IN SECOND EMBASSY NOTE THAT MFA SPECIFY UNDER WHAT LAWS MATERIALS WERE CONFISCATED. TRIFONOV REPLIED TO EFFECT THAT SUCH ACTIONS ARE "NOT TAKEN BY SPECIAL LAW BUT BY INSTRUCTIONS."

4. CONSOFFS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT WITH INCREASING SCIENTIFIC AND OTHER ACADEMIC CONTACTS BETWEEN US AND USSR, THERE MAY BE MORE SUCH CONFISCATIONS, WITH SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS. TRIFONOV REPLIED, INTERESTINGLY, THAT SUCH VISITORS TO USSR SHOULD BE ADVISED "AS WE ADVISE SOVIET SCIENTISTS GOING TO US" TO TRANSMIT THEIR MATERIALS VIA "APPROPRIATE MINISTRY" TO HOST ORGANIZATION. CONSOFFS ASKED IF TRIFONOV MEANT SUCH MATERIALS SHOULD BE TRANSMITTED THROUGH DIPLOMATIC POUCH, AND HE REPLIED AFFIRMATIVELY. CONSOFFS THEN EXPRESSED VIEW THAT THIS MIGHT CREATE PRACTICAL PROBLEM FOR US SIDE, AS SUCH VISITORS TO USSR DO NOT ALWAYS COME UNDER AUSPICES OF EXCHNAGES PROGRAM AND SOME DO NOT EVEN INFORM USG OF THEIR TRAVEL. TRIFONOV REPLIED THAT IN ANY CASE SUCH VISITORS SHOULD INFORM THEMSELVES IN ADVANCE AS TO WHAT MATERIALS THEY MAY CARRY ACROSS SOVIET BORDERS, AND HE SUGGESTED THAT DEPARTMENT OF STATE PLACE ADVISE TO THIS EFFECT IN "TRAVEL TO USSR" BROCHURE.

5. COMMENT: EMBASSY CONSIDERS IT POSSIBLE THAT LUTZKER MATERIALS HAVE BEEN LOST OR DESTROYED, ALTHOUGH MFA IS CLEARLY RELUCTANT TO REPLY DIRECTLY TO THIS QUESTION. UNLESS DEPARTMENT INDICATED OTHERWISE, HOWEVER, EMBASSY PLANS NO FURTHER APPROACH ON THIS CASE.SOMMERLATTE

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